

Convention for the Conservation of Anadromous Stocks in the North Pacific Ocean Basic Instrument for the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC)

Basic Instrument

[Convention](#) for the Conservation of Anadromous Stocks in the North Pacific Ocean, 1992 (hereafter referred to as the "Convention," Senate Treaty Document 102-30, 102d Congress, 2d Session).

Implementing Legislation

The North Pacific Anadromous Stocks [Act](#) of 1992 (Title VIII of Public Law 102-567).

Member Nations

Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States

Commission Headquarters

North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission
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Budget

The approved NPAFC budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2014/2015 (July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015) is CAD\$893,700 with each Party contributing CAD\$180,000. The budget estimate for FY 2015/2016 is CAD\$870,000 with each Party contributing CAD\$180,000.

U.S. Representation

A. Appointment Process:

The United States is represented on the Commission by not more than three U.S. Commissioners who are appointed by the President and serve at his pleasure. Each U.S. Commissioner is appointed for a term not to exceed 4 years, but is eligible for reappointment. Of the three Commissioners, one must be an official of the U.S. Government, one a resident of the State of Alaska, and the third a resident of the State of Washington. Candidates for the non-Federal Commissioner positions must be knowledgeable or experienced concerning anadromous stocks and ecologically-related species of the North Pacific Ocean.

In addition, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, may designate from time to time alternate U.S. Commissioners to the NPAFC. The number of Alternate Commissioners that may be designated to a Commission meeting is limited to the number of authorized U.S. Commissioners that will not be present.

B. U.S. Commissioners (the Alaska position is currently vacant)

James Balsiger
Administrator, Alaska Region (F/AK)
National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, AK 99802-1668

Earl E. Krygier (Alternate Commissioner from Alaska)
12840 Johns Road
Anchorage, AK 99515-3707

Gary T. Smith
Partner
Smith and Stark, LLC
3219 Point Place SW
Seattle, WA 98116

C. Advisory Structure:

The North Pacific Anadromous Stocks Act of 1992 established an Advisory Panel to the United States Section of the NPAFC. The Advisory Panel shall be composed of: (1) the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game; (2) the Director of the Washington Department of Fisheries and Wildlife; (3) one representative of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission; and (4) 11 members (6 residents of the State of Alaska and 5 residents of the State of Washington) appointed by the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, from among a slate of 12 persons nominated by the Governor of Alaska and a slate of 10 persons nominated by the Governor of Washington. There must be at least one representative of commercial salmon fishing interests and one representative of environmental interests on each of the Governors' slates. As is the case with NPAFC Commissioners, Advisors must be knowledgeable of North Pacific anadromous stocks and ecologically related species. Advisors serve for a term not to exceed 4 years, and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. The terms of the most recent Advisory Panel members have expired. The Secretary of State is in the process of appointing a new roster of Advisors.

Description**A. Mission/Purpose:**

The NPAFC serves as a forum for promoting the conservation of anadromous stocks and ecologically-related species, including marine mammals, sea birds, and non-anadromous fish, in the high seas area of the North Pacific Ocean. This area, as defined in the Convention, is "the waters of the North Pacific Ocean and its adjacent seas, north of 33E North Latitude beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured." In addition, the NPAFC serves as the venue for coordinating the collection, exchange, and analysis of scientific data regarding the above species within Convention waters. It also coordinates high seas fishery enforcement activities by member countries (the Convention prohibits directed fishing for salmonids and includes provisions to minimize the incidental take of salmonids in other fisheries in the Convention area).

B. Organizational Structure:

The NPAFC has three standing committees: the Committee on Enforcement (ENFO), the Committee on Finance and Administration (F&A), and the Committee on Scientific Research and Statistics (CSRS). The committees are responsible for providing accurate and timely advice to the Commission in the areas relating to the finances of the Secretariat and the scope of the enforcement activities and scientific research conducted under the auspices of the Commission.

C. Programs:

The Parties to the NPAFC met in Portland, Oregon, on May 12-16, 2014, for the 22nd Annual Meeting of the NPAFC. Observers representing the North Pacific Fish Commission, the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization and the North Pacific Science Organization (PICES) also attended. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Vladimir Belyaev of Russia, President of the NPAFC.

The 22nd NPAFC Annual Meeting was the first face-to-face Annual Meeting since 2012 and the first spring meeting. The NPAFC traditionally held annual meetings in the fall, however, in an effort to economize and eliminate intersessional meetings, it transitioned annual meetings to the spring in 2014.

Outcomes of the 22nd Annual Meeting: The majority of the work of the Commission took place in the three standing committees: ENFO, F&A and the CSRS. The recommendations of each Committee on its agenda items were presented in the form of a report to the Commission for its consideration. These reports were then formally adopted by the Commission at its final plenary session.

ENFO: Fisheries enforcement agencies of the NPAFC member countries reviewed collaborative monitoring and surveillance programs. As a result of the continued strong commitment by NPAFC member countries to such enforcement efforts, no vessels were observed or apprehended for illegal salmon fishing in the NPAFC Convention Area in 2013. The overall reduction in sightings of vessels engaged in illegal fishing activity in the North Pacific testifies to the effectiveness of the Commission's cooperative enforcement model.

The combined monitoring activities in 2013 by NPAFC-related enforcement agencies included over 120 ship patrol days, more than 498 aerial patrol hours, and satellite support. Members collaborated through joint ship patrols, exchanges of personnel in the air and ship patrols of member countries, and regular conference calls.

This year, for the first time in its 21-year history, ENFO convened a joint session with the Commission's scientific committee, CSRS. Together, they explored ways to incorporate scientific data into the enforcement planning process to further increase enforcement effectiveness.

CSRS: The vast majority of Pacific salmon originate in the NPAFC member countries. The member countries reported that the total catch of Pacific salmon in 2013 was 1.11 million metric tons (586 million fish)--the second highest on record. It is exceeded only by the catch of 1.14 million metric tons in 2009. The United States took 46% of the total catch, followed by Russia (37%), Japan (15%), Canada (2%), and Korea (less than 1%). The 2013 species catch composition (by weight) was 53% pink, 31% chum, 12% sockeye, 3% coho and less than 1% each for Chinook, cherry salmon, and steelhead trout.

The total quantity of hatchery fish released from NPAFC member countries in 2013 was 5.0 billion fish, a number that has remained stable since 1993. Of the total, the United States released 1,881 million fish (38%), Japan 1,729 million (35%), Russia 1,039 million (21%), Canada 293 million (6%), and Korea 10 million (< 1%). Hatchery releases comprised mostly chum (63%) and pink salmon (25%), followed by Chinook (5%), sockeye (5%), coho (2%), steelhead trout (less than 1%), and cherry salmon (less than 1%).

In the CSRS meeting, leading salmon researchers from the member countries reviewed new scientific studies of Pacific salmon and steelhead in international waters and adjacent areas. The member countries presented and coordinated salmon research survey plans for the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, Northwest Pacific and Sea of Okhotsk. In addition, Parties presented salmon catch and hatchery statistics, coordinated salmon marking and tagging plans, and reviewed and updated personnel, sample, and data exchanges.

Several studies were presented characterizing salmon oceanic habitat in relation to salmon distribution and abundance. A pilot study of high seas pink and sockeye salmon distributions suggested salmon oceanic habitat cannot be ascertained solely based on sea surface temperature data. Another study indicated pink salmon spatial distribution is affected by oceanographic characteristics, intensity of currents, and fluctuations of pink salmon abundance. A novel approach using coded-wire tag data estimated the numbers of hatchery-origin coho and Chinook salmon in commercial salmon catches and escapements.

Based on genetic analyses, juvenile sockeye salmon caught in the international waters of the central Bering Sea during summer were found to be primarily from Bristol Bay, with smaller contributions from Russian and Canadian rivers. Juvenile chum salmon caught in the eastern Bering Sea in late-summer/fall originated from coastal western Alaska, and most juvenile chum salmon caught in the Chukchi Sea originated in Kotzebue Sound. Juvenile Chinook salmon caught in the eastern Bering Sea originated in coastal western Alaska and the Yukon River.

The NPAFC is planning two upcoming events that will be of interest to researchers and others concerned with the effects of climate change on distribution and production of Pacific salmon: 1) A 1-day workshop on linkages between the winter distribution of Pacific salmon and their marine ecosystems and how this might be altered by climate change will be jointly convened by NPAFC and the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES). This workshop will be held on October 17, 2014, at the PICES 2014 Annual Meeting in Yeosu, Korea. 2) The NPAFC will also host a 3-day international symposium on “Pacific Salmon and Steelhead Production in a Changing Climate: the Past, Present and Future,” on May 17-19, 2015, in Kobe, Japan. The goal of this symposium is to utilize the best available information on marine ecology of salmon and steelhead populations to explain and forecast annual variation in their production. Researchers will review recent research on ecological mechanisms regulating marine distribution and production, climate change impacts on populations and their ecosystems, retrospective analysis of key populations as indicators of conditions in North Pacific marine ecosystems, and implications of ecosystem models for management of salmon and steelhead. Both of these events are open to the public with a registration fee.

F&A Committee: The financial status of the Commission continues to be strong. Currently, each Contracting Party contributes an equal portion--\$180,000--to the annual budget of the Commission. The budget approved at the 23rd Annual Meeting will result in a \$26,000 surplus for the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year which will be transferred to the Commission's working capital fund. Regarding other matters, the Committee recommended selection of a Russian candidate for the 2014 NPAFC internship program.

Salmon Tag Returns: To encourage the return of high-seas salmon and steelhead tags to the NPAFC, the Commission held a prize drawing for those members of the public who returned tags. A total of seven entries were submitted from Japan, Russia, and the United States. The first prize of CAD\$500 went to Chris Bourgeois, Alaska. Second prize of CAD\$300 went to Alexey Taibulatov of Sakhalin, Russia, and third prize of CAD\$200 was awarded to Kazuo Hasegawa of Hokkaido, Japan.

New Executive Director: The Commission selected Dr. Vladimir Radchenko of Russia as the new Executive Director of the NPAFC. His term of office will begin on July 1, 2013.

Enforcement Video: In an effort to increase access to information on the effectiveness of its at-sea monitoring and surveillance of suspected IUU vessels, the NPAFC created a 5-minute video highlighting NPAFC enforcement activities. The video is available in English, Korean, Japanese, and Russian and is accessible on the NPAFC website. (Available at: <http://youtu.be/C3JVBjh6gVI>)

The 2014 NPAFC Award. Established in 2011, the NPAFC Award is presented to groups or individuals whose sustained, significant contributions have helped improve the conservation of anadromous salmon and steelhead stocks in the North Pacific Ocean. At the 22th Annual Meeting, the Commission presented the NPAFC Award to Dr. Katherine Myers, a retired salmon scientist from the University of Washington. Dr. Myers is internationally recognized for her long-term leadership in scientific research and conservation through her extensive body of published work on Pacific salmon and steelhead.

New Officers: The Commission thanked outgoing officers for their dedicated service and welcomed new officers who will serve for the next two years: The new President and Vice President of the NPAFC are Junichiro Okamoto (Japan) and Robin Brown (Canada), respectively. The new Chairman of ENFO is CAPT Alexey Monakhov (Russia); the new Chairman of CSRS is Dr. Loh-Lee Low (United States), and the new Chairman of F&A is Mr. Jeongseok Park (Korea).

23rd NPAFC Annual Meeting: The 23rd NPAFC Annual Meeting will be held in Kobe, Japan, on May 11-15, 2015. Korea will host the 24th Annual Meeting in May 2016.

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